

## Circular Letter No. 485

November 11, 1907

To Superintendents.

Gentlemen:

I am writing you to ask you to call the particular and immediate attention of all teachers under your jurisdiction to the law regarding the administration of corporal punishment. It seems to be particularly important that this matter be taken up with the American teachers, since in two or three instances they have plead ignorance of the law as a mitigating circumstance. Please emphasize the fact that no teachers below the grade of principal or acting principal, are permitted by law to chastise pupils in any way whatsoever. Also call attention to the fact that although certain teachers are permitted to administer corporal punishment it must in every instance be in the presence of two witnesses and that these witnesses, in the case of a pupil in the graded schools must be teachers.

It is a matter of much regret that I have felt compelled to remove one of the American teachers from the teaching force for neglect in this last particular of the law. I am not disposed to support any teacher in any difficulty that may arise if it is plain that the rules of the Department of the laws of the Island have been violated.

You may also call the attention of the teachers to the fact that you have the power to suspend unruly pupils and that the school boards, which I believe are disposed to support the superintendents in this matter, have the power to expel.

I will ask that you immediately either send a copy of this letter to the teachers in your district or give such instructions as seem to you wise.

Respectfully,

Commissioner of Education